



# Somerville Redevelopment Authority

Philip Ercolini, Chair  
Iwona Bonney, Secretary  
Ben Ewen-Campen  
William Gage  
Emily Hedeman  
Patrick McCormick  
Christine Stone

## Meeting Minutes

**Location:** Virtual meeting via GoToWebinar

**Date:** May 19, 2021

**Time:** The meeting started at 5:31 pm

### Attendance

**SRA Members Present:** Iwona Bonney, Ben Ewen-Campen, William Gage, Patrick McCormick, Christine Stone, Phil Ercolini (Chair)

**SRA Members Absent:** Emily Hedeman

**Staff Present:** Eileen McGettigan (Special Counsel), Tom Galligani (Director of Economic Development), Rachel Nadkarni (Urban Revitalization Specialist)

**Guests:** Greg Karczewski (US2)

### Agenda Items

#### 1. Approval of the April, 21, 2021 meeting minutes

- Ms. Bonney motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Gage. The minutes were approved by a roll call vote, unanimously, by all present members.

#### 2. Public comments

- No comments

#### 3. Union Square Update

- Mr. Karczewski from US2, explained that the closing of the D2 parcel took place at the end of the last calendar year with support of the SRA. There has been some construction activity on the site. Primary activities that are going on are site work and utility work. Foundation work is also beginning, and work on the MBTA elevator will soon occur.
- US2 has been working closely with the MBTA, and they are anticipating that the Green Line Extension will start operations later this fall. US2 and the MBTA are working closely to ensure that the station amenities are delivered in time to support the operations of the station.
- Mr. Karczewski also stated that they are working closely with the City of Somerville on the Somerville Avenue streetscape utility project.
- US2 is anticipating that the lab building will be ready for occupancy at the end of next calendar year, and the residential building will be ready for occupancy in early 2023 through the third quarter of 2023.

- Mr. Karczewski provided an update about the D3.1 parcel located at 50 Webster Avenue. The parcel was privately acquired by US2. Closing date is June 30. The Land Disposition Agreement that is being presented is a document required by the MLDA. After acquisition, the team will initiate the site plan process. The D3.1 parcel is slated for a commercial building that was approved as part of the master plan.
- Mr. McCormick asked how long it will take for the MBTA elevator to be ready since the MBTA Green Line Extension will be opening late fall 2021.
- Mr. Karczewski responded that they are working with the MBTA and are hoping that the elevator will be ready early next year. There will be a temporary ADA-compliant path for pedestrians along Prospect Street and then through the site. There will also be an alternative access point at the intersection of Charlestown and Allen Streets.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen asked about the removal of the contaminated material on the site and suggested that US2 give the neighbors some information about what to expect and when that will start.
- Mr. Karczewski obtained State and Federal approvals for the cleanup work plans for the removal of soil. US2 is currently in the process of performing that work. There are several different steps: some of the materials are going off-site, some of the materials will be treated on-site and be kept on-site. Ultimately there will be a cap that will go over portions of the site. This work is underway right now.

#### **4. Vote to execute the Land Disposition Agreement for D3.1**

- Mr. Ewen-Campen asked Ms. McGettigan to explain the Land Disposition Agreement document.
- Ms. McGettigan explained that the genesis of this agreement is the Master Land Disposition Agreement (MLDA). The MLDA not only was a purchase sale agreement for the D.2 parcel but a road map for the disposition of the other six blocks. Although the D3.1 LDA is not a true Land Disposition Agreement, because the SRA does not own D3.1, the LDA binds the D3.1 entity to the MLDA obligations and provides important protections to the SRA in the event that the developer does not fulfill those obligations.

**Motion by Mr. Ewen-Campen to approve the LDA and authorize execution of the LDA by the Chair. Seconded by Ms. Bonney. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, unanimously, by all present members.**

#### **5. Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan Update**

- Mr. Galligani introduced Rachel Nadkarni as the new staff member in the Economic Development division who will be providing the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan update.
- Ms. Nadkarni explained that they are finalizing the plan documents, adding some details, and getting ready to send the plan to DHCD.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that the City Council voted to approve the Urban Renewal Plan and the MOA. Ms. McGettigan sent the partially executed MOA to the SRA members. A vote will be required to authorize Chair Ercolini to execute that document on behalf of the SRA.
- Ms. McGettigan explained that to formally submit the Urban Renewal Plan to DHCD, it will be required to provide proof that public hearings were advertised, provide certificates of vote from

the SRA, Planning Board, City Council, and a letter from the SRA Counsel opining that everything was done properly.

- A vote from the SRA will be required to designate the Winter Hill area as it is defined in the Plan as a decadent area.

**Motion to approve the determination of decadence by Mr. McCormick. Seconded by Mr. Ewen-Campen. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, unanimously, by all present members.**

**Motion to execute the City Council and SRA Memorandum of Agreement by Mr. Gage. Seconded by Ms. Bonney. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, unanimously, by all present members.**

## 6. 90 Washington Street Update

- Ms. McGettigan explained that the SJC decided in favor of the SRA and that the SRA has the power of eminent domain by virtue of the 90 Washington Demonstration Project Plan.
- The former owners have 90 days to appeal to the United States Supreme Court. Ms. McGettigan explained that we will wait 91 days and then we will begin the damages portion of the case.
- Mr. Galligani provided a presentation to update the SRA on the current progress with the site and the public safety building planning. The Public Safety Building Committee has been formed and has started figuring out a solution for the Public Safety Building. The public engagement process for the private portion of the site has not yet begun. An early decision was made about whether the public safety building will be developed as a stand-alone building or integrated as part of a mixed-use project. It was decided by the City and the Public Safety Building Committee to move forward with a stand-alone police station, and to build the private buildings on the balance of the site.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen stated that Councilor McLaughlin, who represents this district, put a resolution that some members of the City Council signed on expressing concern that the process will lead to building a public safety building only.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen asked the staff when the SRA can expect to know more about the rest of the parcel and the process about housing and commercial building.
- Ms. McGettigan explained that the MOU between the SRA and the City Council details the process for figuring out what to do with the development parcels that are not the safety building.
- Mr. Galligani explained that the City staff is working on a schedule.

## 7. Assembly Square Update

- Assembly Row has some new store openings. CVS and Sephora both opened on May 2nd. Shake Shack, SweetGreen, Warby Parker, Cambridge Savings Bank, and Totto Yakitori will open in the Summer of 2021.
- Puma will begin to occupying their building starting in July/August
- Night Shift Brewing will partner with The Smoke Shop to create an outdoor activation space at Assembly Row.
- There are no updates on the Assembly Square Neighborhood Plan. Staff is working with the consultant group to review the results from the recent public engagement process.
- 120 Middlesex Avenue just received approval from the Planning Board for their lab building, and they may break ground early next year.

- XMBLY is waiting to submit plans to get approval for their first phase of the lab portion of the building. The residential portion is under development. The City is working with them to add a fire station in the garage of that building.
- Mr. Ercolini asked about Federal Realty's long term plan with the former Kmart space.
- Mr. Galligani explained that Federal Realty has a medium-term plan, and a long term plan. In the medium-term plan, they are hoping to lease the vacant space to different tech companies. Their long term vision is to demolish the building, and turn it to a mixed-use development.

## 8. Other business

- Ms. McGettigan mentioned that the Governor lifted the restrictions placed for COVID-19 and that the ability to hold remote meetings also ends when the state of emergency is lifted on June 15, 2021.

## 9. Public Comments

- Erica Tarland asked if the minutes of this meeting could be posted on the SRA's website.
- Councilor Niedergang asked how tall the public safety building could be.
- Mr. Galligani explained that in the public safety building meeting they talked about the possibility of the building to be 3 to 4 stories.

10. **Next Meeting:** June 16, 2021 at 5:30 PM. Location: Virtual Meeting- Software GotoWebinar

## 11. Meeting Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn by Ms. Bonney and seconded by Mr. McCormick. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, unanimously, by all present members.**

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 pm.

## Meeting Documents

- SRA-US2 D3.1 Land Development Agreement 05.14.21
- SRA-City Council MOA Partially Executed 04.30.21
- 90 Washington St Update to the SRA 5.19.2021